

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of Boeing's Space Launch Initiative TA-2 Self-Reacting Friction Stir Welding Cryogenic Tank Demonstration Team. Recently, these engineers from Huntsville, Alabama and Huntington Beach, California, successfully joined two twenty-seven foot diameter aluminum barrels together using a new process that utilizes friction rather than traditional welding methods. This successful test at the Marshall Space Flight Center was the largest test of the circumferential self-reacting friction stir welding. Boeing officials recognized this significant achievement by awarding this engineering team with the Boeing Silver Phantom Award.

This process will help NASA to overcome many technical obstacles that it will face during its ambitious exploration plans. By using friction, rather than electrical or gas fusion methods, the weld is significantly stronger and performed at a higher quality and lower cost. This process enables a wider range of options as NASA considers designs for future space launch vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, I close by sending my sincere congratulations to the Self-Reacting Friction Stir Welding Cryogenic Tank Demonstration Team for winning Boeing's Silver Phantom Award. I am proud to recognize their hard work and dedication that led to this important technical achievement.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2003
11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
OF NEW JERSEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2004

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for Navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to the Nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer

corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed over 50 applicants. Nominations included 9 to the Naval Academy, 10 to the Military Academy, 5 to the Merchant Marine Academy and 8 to the Air Force Academy—the Coast Guard Academy does not use the Congressional nomination process. The recommendations are then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan, Iraq, or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2003 11TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Ryan M. Cortner, Scotland, International School
Michael P. Dickson, Flanders, Mt. Olive H.S.
Marc D. Honrath, Dover, Morris Knolls H.S.
Asha Padmanabhan, Raritan, Bridgewater—Raritan
Heather G. Pinsky, Morristown, Morristown H.S.
Edward J. Schmeltz, Chatham, Chatham H.S.
Anthony Stegman, Sparta, Sparta H.S.
Christopher A. Wolff, Mendham, West Morris Mendham H.S.

MERCHANT MARINE

Steve R. Kline, Chatham, Chatham H.S.
Vincent J. Lusardi, Rockaway, Morris Hills H.S.
Jarrod M. Prill, Boonton, Boonton H.S.
Eric B. Warner, Morris Plains, Parsippany Hills H.S.
Richard W. White, Bloomingdale, Butler H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

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Assison T. Gaydosh, Bridgewater, Syracuse University
Sean P. Groome, Andover, Lenape Valley H.S.
Ross Kuskovsky, Livingston, Livingston H.S.
Anthony A. Margue, Randolph, Randolph H.S.
Michael A. Robinson, Brookside, West Morris Mendham H.S.
Allen J. Rooney, Madison, Madison H.S.
Stephane M. Slotten, Mendham, Newark Academy
Christopher M. Tarney, Chatham, Seton Hall Prep
Ernie Young, Whippany, Whippany Park H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Sean K. Bergstrom, Mendham, Delbarton
Bradley C. Fromm, Madison, Madison H.S.
Chris Lakhiani, Mountain Lakes, Mountain Lakes H.S.
Julie-Ann Latona, Madison, Madison H.S.
John S. Quick, Liberty Corner, Oratory Prep
Jonathan V. Salmon, Bridgewater, St. Joseph's H.S.
Brian M. Schenig, Pompton Plains, Pequannock H.S.
Sarah A. Shewmaker, Short Hills, Millburn H.S.
Michael R. Wooters, Morristown, Seton Hall Prep
Michael J. Zecca, Bridgewater, Bridgewater—Raritan H.S.

HONORING U.S. MARSHAL MARK
TUCKER

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2004

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of one of North Carolina's most respected law enforcement officers, a man whom I am proud to have called a friend.

Deputy Mark Reid Tucker served our community as both a Wake County Sheriff's Deputy and a U.S. Marshal for eastern North Carolina. No matter the rank, law enforcement was a job he loved—and a job he did exceedingly well. He was killed in the line of duty earlier this month at 49 years of age.